



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 31 2001

THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dear CEO:

An important part of this Administration's approach to environmental policy making is finding the common ground that will achieve our goal – namely, preserving, protecting, and improving our environment while strengthening the economy for our families, and their future. I believe that America is ready to move beyond the command and control model that has usually defined Washington's relationship with the rest of the country on environmental policy. With this in mind I am writing you today to encourage your participation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Voluntary Children's Chemical Evaluation Program (VCCEP).

EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPPTS) announced VCCEP in the Federal Register on December 26, 2000. The intent of VCCEP is to provide the Agency and the public with a better understanding of the potential health risks to children associated with chemicals to which they may be exposed. Twenty-three (23) chemicals were selected for the pilot of the VCCEP because existing data indicate they are present in the environment and have been found in human biomonitoring samples. EPA is asking the manufacturers and importers of these 23 chemicals to sponsor their chemicals in the VCCEP pilot by voluntarily committing to provide the first of potentially three tiers of needed information. All data evaluation and development pursued in this program will strictly follow a rigorous science-based approach. Equally important, by implementing the VCCEP process, we will demonstrate this Administration's strong interest in addressing identified concerns by pursuing voluntary, collaborative efforts with industry and, where appropriate, using regulatory approaches to bolster the voluntary initiative.

The Acting Assistant Administrator of OPPTS, Stephen L. Johnson, wrote directly to technical contacts for the manufacturers and importers of the 23 chemicals on March 16, 2001. In that letter, we asked for a commitment to sponsor chemicals by June 25, 2001.

The current VCCEP framework reflects nearly three years of EPA efforts to substantively engage with diverse stakeholders, including representatives of chemical manufacturers, to design a program which will provide for the development and public availability of chemical risk information relevant to children. The launch of the VCCEP continues a powerful new collaborative approach to environmental protection, one initiated with the High Production

Volume (HPV) Challenge. This collaborative approach offers opportunities for EPA, the chemical industry, and the environmental and children's health interest groups to work together toward a common goal, in this case, protecting children from potential chemical hazards. I hope that, with the leadership and assistance of CEOs like yourself, we can accomplish this goal together.

To participate in the VCCEP, I ask that you commit to sponsor the pilot chemicals that your company manufactures or imports. This commitment will entail evaluating available existing data on health effects, exposure, and risk and developing data where gaps in Tier 1 information exist. The health effects data to be developed in the first tier of the VCCEP are, in fact, the same health effects data as that developed under the HPV Challenge. I recognize that your commitment represents an impact on your company's resources, which is why I am contacting all the manufacturers and importers of the 23 chemicals in the U.S. chemical industry to encourage collaboration in this effort. The VCCEP was designed to be flexible to allow for the formation of consortia with your industrial colleagues as a means of sharing costs for the needed data collection and data development activities.

Your commitment to participate in the VCCEP and voluntarily provide this important information on the chemicals produced or imported by your company is the cornerstone of this program. Your environmental stewardship efforts will result in an improved public understanding of the potential risk, if any, to children from exposure to these chemicals. Further, your participation will publicly demonstrate your corporate commitment to right-to-know and to environmental stewardship.

To assist your company in making this important decision, I am enclosing additional information on the VCCEP, including a copy of the March 16th letter to technical contacts of potential sponsoring companies, a fact sheet that lists the pilot chemicals and other sources of information such as the Chemical Right to Know (ChemRTK) Web Site, and information regarding the necessary content of a commitment letter and how to submit it to EPA.

I look forward to working with you on this very important initiative and on making the VCCEP a success. Together our collaborative efforts in the VCCEP will not only improve our understanding of chemical effects and enhance our ability to protect our children, they will serve to bolster the trust and confidence of the American people in both government and the chemical industry as responsible guardians of children's health and safety.

Sincerely yours,

Christine Todd Whitman

Enclosures